

# News Release



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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## **142<sup>nd</sup> KENTUCKY DERBY AND KENTUCKY OAKS, RENAMED WISE DAN TOP \$8.25 MILLION SCHEDULE OF STAKES RACES SET FOR CHURCHILL DOWNS' 2016 SPRING MEET**

**Schedule Features Six Grade I Events, Seven Multi-Stakes Programs In 38-Day Session**

**LOUISVILLE, Ky. (Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2015)** – The 142<sup>nd</sup> renewals the \$2 million **Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands** (Grade I) and \$1 million **Longines Kentucky Oaks** (GI) on the first weekend in May headline a roster of 26 stakes events – 23 of which are graded races – scheduled for Churchill Downs Race Track's 2016 Spring Meet highlighted by six Grade I races and total stakes purses of \$8.25 million.

The racing program headlined by the Kentucky Derby, America's greatest race, on Saturday, May 7 features seven graded stakes races – three of them Grade I events – with total stakes purses of \$4.15 million. The Friday, May 6 program headed by the Longines Kentucky Oaks, the nation's top race for 3-year-old fillies, includes a pair of Grade I events among its six graded stakes and total stakes purses for the day of \$2.2 million.

The 2016 Spring Meet stakes schedule includes seven racing days that will feature two or more stakes events and the meet's total purses reflect an increase of \$200,000 or 2.5 percent from the \$8.05 million offered during the 2015 Spring Meet.

The 38-day Spring Meet begins with the historic track's "Opening Night" under the "Downs After Dark Presented by Stella Artois and Old Forester" lights on Saturday, April 30, and the featured event of the night that launches Kentucky Derby and Kentucky Oaks Week will be the second running of the \$100,000 **William Walker**. The six-furlong stakes race for 3-year-olds honors Walker, one of the pioneer African-American jockeys who dominated the Churchill Downs jockey colony in its early years. Spring Meet racing will conclude with "Closing Night" on Saturday, July 2, the last of the meet's three "Downs After Dark" night racing programs.

Important changes in the 2016 Spring Meet stakes schedule include a new name, distance and placement for the \$200,000 **Wise Dan** (GII), a 1 1/16-mile event on turf formerly known as the Firecracker. The Wise Dan is now part of the popular "Downs After Dark" program on Saturday, June 18 headed by the \$500,000 **Stephen Foster Handicap** (GI). The Wise Dan had previously been run during the closing weekend of the Spring Meet.

The Wise Dan is named in honor of **Mort Fink**'s two-time Horse of the Year who completed a spectacular racing career with a perfect four-race season in 2014. The **Charlie LoPresti**-trained gelding by Wiseman's Ferry compiled a remarkable lifetime record of 23-2-0 in 31 races with earnings of \$7,552,920. He earned seven of those victories from his 11 starts at Churchill Downs, which included a pair of triumphs in the Firecracker that included his successful debut on the grass in its 2011 running and a hedge-skimming victory over yielding turf in a driving rain storm in 2013. Wise Dan's Churchill Downs success also included victories in the Grade I **Woodford Reserve Turf Classic** (GI) in 2013 and 2014, and memorable runs on the main track that included a victory in the 2011 **Clark Handicap Presented by Norton Healthcare** (GI) and a runner-up finish in the 2012 **Stephen Foster Handicap** in which he lost by a head to **Ron the Greek**. Wise Dan also earned a pair of Eclipse Awards as both turf champion and champion older horse.

"It means so much to us to have that race named to honor Wise Dan," LoPresti said. "He's been a great horse, and we've had so much fun with him and we're proud of him. I've often thought that someday somebody would name a race after him, and I'm glad that Churchill was the first to come up with it because he's won so many races there and is such a big part of Churchill Downs."

The Kentucky Derby Day stakes program is the most lucrative single-day Churchill Downs racing program in track history. The Kentucky Derby, run annually since 1875 and America's oldest continuously-held major sporting event, attracted a record crowd of 170,513 in 2015 that witnessed a gritty victory by **Zayat Stables' American Pharoah**, the colt's first step toward his historic sweep of the Triple Crown. His sweep of the three-race series was the first since 1978 and only the 12<sup>th</sup> Triple Crown in American racing history.

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The other Grade I events on the 2016 Derby Day stakes roster are the Woodford Reserve Turf Classic and the \$300,000 **Humana Distaff**, a seven-furlong race for fillies and mares age 4 and up. Other Derby Day stakes include the \$500,000 **Churchill Downs** (GII), a seven-furlong main track race for 4-year-olds and up; the \$300,000 **Churchill Distaff Turf Mile Presented by Longines** (GII) for fillies and mares age 4 and up at one mile on turf; the \$300,000 **American Turf Presented by Ram Trucks**, a Grade II race for 3-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles on turf; and the \$250,000 **Pat Day Mile Presented by LG&E and KU**, a Grade III event for 3-year-olds at a mile known until last year as the Derby Trial. The latter is named in honor of Hall of Fame jockey **Pat Day**, the all-time win leader at Churchill Downs whose success beneath the Twin Spires included a triumph in the 1992 Kentucky Derby aboard **W.C. Partee's Lil E. Tee**.

Joining the main event on the Longines Kentucky Oaks Day roster of six stakes races are the \$300,000 **La Troienne** (GI), a 1 1/16-mile race for fillies and mares age 4 and up; the \$400,000 **Alysheba** (GII) for 4-year-olds and up at 1 1/16 miles; the \$200,000 **Eight Belles**, a seven-furlong race for 3-year-old fillies that has been elevated to Grade II status for its 2016 running; the \$150,000 **Twin Spires Turf Sprint** (GIII) for 3-year-olds and up at five furlongs on turf; and the \$150,000 **Edgewood Presented by Forcht Bank**, a 1 1/16-mile race for 3-year-old fillies on turf that will be run as a Grade III event for the first time.

Restored to the Kentucky Derby Week stakes schedule for the first time since 2010 is the \$100,000 **Kentucky Juvenile**, a five-furlong test for 2-year-olds that will be the racing highlight of Churchill Downs' celebration of **"Thurby"** on Thursday, May 5.

With the addition of the Wise Dan, the Stephen Foster Handicap and "Downs After Dark" program on Saturday, June 18 will offer five graded stakes races with total purses of \$1.1 million. The roster also includes the \$200,000 **Fleur De Lis Handicap** (GII), a 1 1/8-mile race for fillies and mares age 3 and up; the \$100,000 **Matt Winn** (GIII), a race for 3-year-olds at 1 1/16 miles on dirt named in honor of Churchill Downs' legendary president and Kentucky Derby impresario **Col. Matt Winn**; and the \$100,000 **Regret** (GIII), a race for 3-year-old fillies at 1 1/8 miles on turf named in honor of the winner of the 1915 Kentucky Derby – the first of only three fillies to win the "Run for the Roses" during its 141-year history.

Along with the Spring Meet's 26 stakes races, Churchill Downs will offer six \$65,000-added overnight stakes races, four of which will be part of seven multi-stakes programs offering during the meet. The remaining spring programs that will feature multiple stakes races include:

- A Saturday, May 21 program headlined by the \$100,000 **Louisville Handicap** (GIII) for 3-year-olds and up at 1 1/2 miles on turf and the **Opening Verse**, an overnight stakes for 3-year-olds and up that will be run at a new distance of a mile on turf. The Opening Verse, a local prep for the Wise Dan, had previously been run at 1 1/16 miles on grass;
- A two-stakes program on Saturday, May 28 that features the \$100,000 **Winning Colors** (GIII) for fillies and mares 3 and up at six furlongs and the **Keertana** overnight stakes for fillies and mares 3 and up at 1 ½ miles on grass;
- A Saturday, June 4 program headed by the \$100,000 **Aristides** (GIII) for 3-year-olds and up at six furlongs and the new **Mighty Beau** overnight stakes for 3-year-olds and up at five furlongs on turf; and
- The "Closing Night" celebration on Saturday, July 2 that includes the \$100,000 **Bashford Manor** (GIII) for 2-year-olds at six furlongs, the \$100,000 **Debutante** (Listed) for 2-year-old fillies at six furlongs and the Kelly's Landing overnight stakes for 3-year-olds and up at seven furlongs.

Stand-alone features during the Spring Meet include:

- The \$100,000 **Old Forester Mint Julep** (GIII) for fillies and mares 3 and up at 1 1/16 miles on turf on Saturday, June 11 (the same day as the Belmont Stakes in New York);
- The **Unbridled Sydney** overnight stakes for fillies and mares 3 and up at five furlongs on turf on Saturday, May 14; and
- The **Roxelana**, an overnight stakes event for fillies and mares 3 and up at six furlongs on Saturday, June 25.

Changes for individual stakes events in 2016 include:

- **Wise Dan** – new name, position on schedule and distance increased from one mile to 1 1/16 miles;
- **Eight Belles** – elevated to Grade II status;
- **Edgewood** – elevated to Grade III status;
- **American Turf** – purse increased by \$50,000 to \$300,000;
- **Pat Day Mile** – purse increased by \$50,000 to \$250,000;
- **Kentucky Juvenile** – returns to Spring Meet stakes schedule for first time since 2010;
- **Opening Verse** – distance of overnight stakes on turf reduced to a mile from 1 1/16 miles.

## Churchill Downs' 2016 Spring Meet Stakes Schedule

Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2016

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**CHURCHILL DOWNS 2016 SPRING MEET STAKES SCHEDULE****Saturday, April 30 – Saturday, July 2**

DATE	RACE (Grade)	DIVISION	DISTANCE	SURFACE
<b>OPENING NIGHT – Downs After Dark Presented by Stella Artois and Old Forester</b>				
Sat., April 30	\$100,000 William Walker	3YO	6 F	Dirt
<b>THURBY</b>				
Thurs., May 5	\$100,000 Kentucky Juvenile	2YO	5 F	Dirt
<b>LONGINES KENTUCKY OAKS</b>				
Fri., May 6	\$1 million Longines Kentucky Oaks (GI)	3YO Fillies	1 1/8 M	Dirt
	\$300,000 La Troienne (GI)	4YO & Up F&M	1 1/16 M	Dirt
	\$400,000 Alysheba (GII)	4YO & Up	1 1/16 M	Dirt
	\$200,000 Eight Belles (GII)	3YO Fillies	7 F	Dirt
	\$150,000 Edgewood Presented by Forcht Bank (GIII)	3YO Fillies	1 1/16 M	Turf
	\$150,000 Twin Spires Turf Sprint (GIII)	3YO & Up	5 F	Turf
<b>KENTUCKY DERBY PRESENTED BY YUM! BRANDS</b>				
Sat. May, 7	\$2 million Kentucky Derby Presented by Yum! Brands (GI)	3YO	1 1/4 M	Dirt
	\$500,000 Woodford Reserve Turf Classic (GI)	4YO & Up	1 1/8 M	Turf
	\$300,000 Humana Distaff (GI)	4YO & Up F & M	7 F	Dirt
	\$500,000 Churchill Downs (GII)	4YO & Up	7 F	Dirt
	\$300,000 Churchill Distaff Turf Mile Presented by Longines (GII)	4YO & Up F & M	1 M	Turf
	\$300,000 American Turf Presented by Ram Trucks (GIII)	3YO	1 1/16 M	Turf
	\$250,000 Pat Day Mile (GIII)	3YO	1 M	Dirt
Sat., May 14	\$65,000-added Unbridled Sydney Overnight Stakes	3YO & Up F & M	5 F	Turf
Sat., May 21	\$100,000 Louisville Handicap (GIII)	3YO & Up	1 1/2 M	Turf
	\$65,000-added Opening Verse Overnight Stakes	3YO & Up	1 M	Turf
Sat., May 28	\$100,000 Winning Colors (GIII)	3YO & Up F & M	6 F	Dirt
	\$65,000-added Keertana Overnight Stakes	3YO & Up F & M	1 1/2 M	Turf
Sat., June 4	\$100,000 Aristides (GIII)	3YO & Up	6 F	Dirt
	\$65,000-added Mighty Beau Overnight Stakes	3YO & Up	5 F	Turf
Sat., June 11	\$100,000 Old Forester Mint Julep Handicap (GIII)	3YO & Up F & M	1 1/16 M	Turf
<b>STEPHEN FOSTER HANDICAP – Downs After Dark Presented by Stella Artois and Old Forester</b>				
Sat., June 18	\$500,000 Stephen Foster Handicap (GI)	3YO & UP	1 1/8 M	Dirt
	\$200,000 Fleur de Lis Handicap (GII)	3YO & Up F & M	1 1/8 M	Dirt
	\$200,000 Wise Dan (GII)	3YO & UP	1 1/16 M	Turf
	\$100,000 Matt Winn (GIII)	3YO	1 1/16 M	Dirt
	\$100,000 Regret (GIII)	3YO Fillies	1 1/8 M	Turf
Sat., June 25	\$65,000-added Roxelana Overnight Stakes	3YO & Up F & M	6 F	Dirt
<b>CLOSING NIGHT – Downs After Dark Presented by Stella Artois and Old Forester</b>				
Sat., July 2	\$100,000 Bashford Manor (GIII)	2 YO	6 F	Dirt
	\$100,000 Debutante (Listed)	2 YO Fillies	6 F	Dirt
	\$65,000-added Kelly's Landing Overnight Stakes	3YO & Up	7 F	Dirt

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